

SEABIRD ISLANDS

No. 58

Seal Island, King George Sound, Western Australia

Location: 35° 05' S., 117° 58' E., 2 km north of Flinders Peninsula, King George Sound, W.A.

Status: Class C Reserve, vested in the W.A. Wildlife Authority for conservation of flora and fauna.

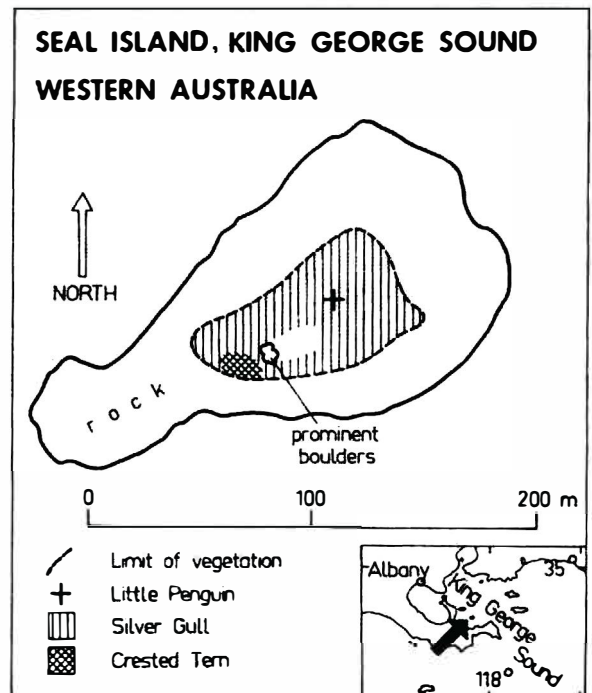
Description: About 1.8 ha; pear-shaped in plan, some 230 m long by 130 m at the widest, and 32 m high towards the eastern end. The island is steep-sided except for a rocky spit at the western end. The formation is granite-gneiss and good depths of soil occur on the 'backbone'. Twenty-one species of plants have been recorded, the dominant species being Annual Veldt Grass *Ehrharta longiflora*, Tussock Grass *Poa australis* and Australian Hollyhock *Lavatera plebeia*.

Landing: Possible only in calm weather: suitable onto a ledge on the northern side.

Ornithological History: On 20 January 1818, P. P. King landed on Seal Island from HMS *Mermaid* and noted Little Penguins, gulls (probably both Silver and Pacific) and Cape Barren Geese'. On a later visit on 4 January 1822 he saw Little Penguins. I. Abbott spent 45 minutes on the island on 28 November 1975; he found Silver Gulls, Crested Terns and Little Penguins breeding.

Breeding Seabirds and Status

Eudyptula minor Little Penguin — On 28 November 1975, one young penguin was hiding between two rocks and one adult was in a hole sitting on two eggs. Up to a few pairs probably breed regularly on the island.



Haematopus fuliginosus Sooty Oystercatcher — A pair probably breeds regularly on the island about October/November (Reported breeding by T. Allen—pers. comm.).

Larus novaehollandiae Silver Gull — Many nests with eggs were seen in November 1975 but only one chick was found. In August 1976, N. Kolichis



● Seal Island (looking south).



● View of the north-west side.

(pers. comm.) reported about 200 pairs with eggs.

Hydroprogne caspia Caspian Tern — A pair probably breeds irregularly on the island. (Reported breeding by T. Allen — pers. comm.).

Sterna bergii Crested Tern — About 30 birds were on eggs in November 1975. A few probably breed regularly on the island.

Factors Affecting Status

King's Skink *Egernia kingii* is present and no doubt predated some eggs.

Other Seabirds Recorded

*Cereopsis novaehollandiae** Cape Barren Goose¹.
Larus pacificus Pacific Gull.

* Now extinct: west of the Archipelago of the Recherche.

Banding

Nil.

Bibliography

1. King, P. P. (1827), Narrative of a Survey of the Intertropical and Western Coasts of Australia, performed between the year 1818 and 1822 . . . 2 vols. Murray, London.

Acknowledgements

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